A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday June 30. 1711.

I Gave some Introductory Account in my last, to the Af[illegible] of the *South-Seas*; I hinted as br[illegible] as I could, the Time and Manner when and, how the *Spaniards* came to the Poſſeſſion of their preſent vaſt Dominions in *America*: It follows now to mention, how their Property to the Place Entail'd the Commerce of the Country upon them with an equal Right, and having as I hinted in my laſt, ſecur'd the Coaſts by Fortifications and ſtrong Garriſons, they Erected the Greateſt and moſt Advantageous Trade there, beyond Compariſon of any in the World.

It will be neceſſary, in order to Introduct what we are to ſay about our New Trade thither, to let you ſee,

1. What that Trade is.
2. How it has been hitherto carried on.
3. How it may be Attempted by us, and upon what Foundation.
4. What hazards there may be of Succeſs in the Attempt; And what Advantages if it ſucceeds.

This I think may take in moſt of what is needful to be ſaid upon this Head; and if I am oblig'd to dwell upon it longer than ſome People love to hear of the ſame Story,

I must ask Pardon of the Impatient, and Ballance my own Thoughts, with the Sense of the Satisfaction I may give to others, and the Service I may do to the Publick, which seem now at some *Dilemma's* in their Thoughts about it.

As to the first——— *What is the Trade is?* It may be needful for this Enquiry, to go back to the Subject of the last *Review*, *viz.* The Securing the Possession of the Country; this I have noted was done by Building Forts, Castles, and Cities, Fortifying Harbours, *&c.* and then by settling Laws for the Preservation of what they had possess'd.

The first *Law* for this purpose was, That no Ship or Person should be suffer'd to come into their Harbours, or go on Shoar upon their Land, but what should come directly from the King of *Spain*'s Dominions in *Europe*, &c. And that no Ship or Vessel, should go from any part of *America* to *Europe*, except to the Dominions of *Spain*.

This Law as it was most just, so it was an effectual Step to secure the Commerce, as well as the property of the Place; for if either the Ships, the Merchandizes, or the People of other Countries, might have been permitted to go to these New Dominions, and to return from thence, then indeed had the *Spaniards* made this Conquest for those other Nations, not for themselves, and the Profits had been Ours and the *Hollanders*, rather than the *Spaniards*.

Note, this is the same Thing, which by our Act of Navigation is Establish'd with our *American* Colonies, and if it were not so, some of them would be of very small Advantage to us.

By this Constitution, the *Spaniards* reaped two Advantages:

1. They secur'd the Return of all the Bullion, the Gold and Silver, which in so immense a Quantity comes from *America*, that it should all be brought into *Spain*, where, had their Laws been as effectual to keep it from being carried out again, as they are for its being brought thither, they had been the Richest Nation in the World.

2. By this they made *Old-Spain*, the Mart or Staple for all the *European* Goods, which were brought from the respective Countries to go to *New-Spain*, both which occasion'd a mighty Circulation of Commerce, and is infinitely Gainful as well to *Old-Spain*, as to all the rest of *Europe*.

I might enlarge here upon the mighty Advantages to *Old-Spain*, by this restraint upon the Trade, and how it has kept the Possession of *New-Spain* so entire to themselves, undisturb'd and undisputed by the rest of *Europe*, that it is a kind of *Terra incognita* to this Day, to all the rest of the World. The whole Continent on the West Shoars, as far either North or South as is Inhabited or as is Habitable, is possess'd by the *Spaniards*, from *Chili* and the Latitude of 52 Southward to *Acapulco*, and on to the Latitude of 36 Northward of the Line, several Great and Populous Cities have been built here, as *Panama*, *Lima*, *Cusco*, *Acapulco*, and the like; this is the Coast, which we, tho' very improperly, call the *South-Seas*: On the other Shoar they possess all the Country on the Sea Coast, from our *Carolina* and the Latitude of 36 Northward, to the Northermost Coast of *Brazil*, and from the Southermost Coast of *Brazil* to the *Rio de la Plata* or *Paraguay*, in which they have those very Profitable Colonies of *Buenos*, *Ayres*, and *Sperito Santo*, and all the rest of the Coast, to the Streights of *Magellan*, would be Planted by them, if it were capable of any Production or Improvement.

Two Things in this Great Possession created Trade, and either infinitely Profitable to the *Spaniards*.

1. The want of Cloaths, Houshold-Furniture, Arms, Ammunition, Metals, and all sorts of *European* Goods, which the *Spaniards* found necessary to carry with

with them (or ſend for afterwards) when they ſettled in that Country, of which I ſhall deſcend to Particulars.

2. The Value in *Europe* of thoſe Goods which that Country produc'd, and with which they made the return, to an immenſe Gain to the *European* Merchants, for the Goods they receiv'd from *Europe*.

Theſe two made the great Articles of Export and Import, which conſtitute Forreign Trade, and of theſe two it may be neceſſary to ſay ſomething, in order to let us into ſome Knowledge of what this Trade to the *South Seas* IS, or *is like to be*.

The Export from *Spain* to the Coaſt of *America*, conſiſts not in any conſiderable Quantity of Goods, of the Growth or Produce of *Old-Spain*; firſt, becauſe as to Manufactures, we all know *Spain* has none; as to Wines, the Country is too hot to preſerve them; Oyl they produce of their own, and for all ſorts of Delicious Fruits, *America* out-does all the World —— The moſt therefore they carry from *Spain* to *America*, which is of the Growth of *Spain*, is Iron in Barrs and Steel from *Biſcay*, and ſome dry'd Fruit or Raiſins, from *Alicant* and *Malaga*.

The reſt of *Europe* ſeverally ſupplies, as follows.

Italy. From *Genoa* and *Milan*, fine *Italian* Wrought Silks, Thrown Silks, Dy'd and Unwrought.

France. Fine Black Silks, Alamodes and Luteſtrings, with fine Linnens and ſome light fine Worſted Stuffs, Druggets—Toys, Perfumes, Eſſences, Tinctures, and Gaſſemin Gloves, Glaſs, Hats, Canvaſs, and Courſe Linnen.

Holland. Linnen, *Eaſt-India* Silks, Calicoes, Spice, Cordage, and all ſorts of Naval Stores from the Eaſt Country.

England. All the Various kinds of our Woollen Manufacture, particularly Bayes, Sayes, Broad-Cloath, Serges, and Perpets, to an inconceivable Quantity, with Calicoes and Silks from the *Eaſt-Indies*.

Alſo Slaves from *Guinea* ——

By that permiſſion which the *Spaniards* call the *Aſſiento*, and which, had we the Senſe and Forecaſt in *England*, to Value our *African* Trade and ſettle it as we ought, might have been ours.

I ſhall mention the Returns from thence in my next.

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